

# LYNCHBURG CITY COUNCIL

## Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE: **April 12, 2005**

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 9

CONSENT:

REGULAR: **X**

CLOSED SESSION:  
(Confidential)

ACTION: **X**

INFORMATION:

**ITEM TITLE: Resolution in Support of Roanoke Regional Airport Commission Regarding Possible Closure of the Roanoke Regional Airport's Air Traffic Control Tower at Night**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt a Resolution in support of the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission's resolution opposing the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA's) proposal to close the Roanoke Regional Airport's Air Traffic Control Tower at night.

**SUMMARY:**

As part of a cost-cutting measure, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is proposing that the Roanoke Regional Airport Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) be closed between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m. daily. Since Lynchburg Regional Airport is provided all of its terminal radar control (TRACON) services from ATCT personnel located in Roanoke, such a proposal will have a significant impact on air traffic control services in the Lynchburg area as well. Besides the elimination of such services, the FAA proposal would also have a significant negative impact on aviation safety by eliminating the positive control of air traffic during a critical phase of flight, and within a region that contains considerable mountainous terrain.

On March 16, 2005, the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission passed Resolution # 10-031605 which expressed the Commission's strong opposition to the FAA proposal. To show Lynchburg's support, the Lynchburg Regional Airport Commission is recommending that Lynchburg City Council adopt a similar resolution.

**PRIOR ACTION(S):**

March 28, 2005: Lynchburg Regional Airport Commission passes motion recommending that Lynchburg City Council adopt resolution opposing FAA proposal.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** none

**CONTACT(S):**

Mark F. Courtney      455-6089      Airport Director

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

- 1) Resolution
- 2) Resolution of the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission (#10-031605)
- 3) Resolutions adopted by Roanoke City Council and the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors

**REVIEWED BY:** lkp

## RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Federal Aviation Administration has proposed closing the Air Traffic Control Tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m. daily; and,

WHEREAS, Lynchburg Regional Airport receives all of its terminal radar control (TRACON) services through the Roanoke Regional Airport Air Traffic Control Tower utilizing a terminal airport surveillance radar (ASR-9) facility located on a Candler's Mountain site adjacent to Lynchburg Regional Airport that was constructed in 1999; and,

WHEREAS, that these terminal radar services are deemed vital to the continued safe operation of air traffic of all types throughout the Central Virginia region, especially considering the presence of considerable mountainous terrain in the vicinity of Lynchburg and to its west; and,

WHEREAS, continuing this enhanced radar coverage during these hours will maintain the air traffic controller's ability to better manage aircraft movements in the Lynchburg area, provide accurate aircraft and separation information within a 60-mile range of Lynchburg Regional Airport, and continue to enhance safety through superior radar coverages at lower altitudes in the mountainous areas west of the airport; and

WHEREAS, the Lynchburg City Council and the Lynchburg Regional Airport Commission share the same safety concerns over this proposal, and have a common interest in continuing the 24-hour operation of the Roanoke Regional Airport Air Traffic Control Tower; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED That the Lynchburg City Council supports resolution #10-031605 adopted by the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission on March 16, 2005, and also expresses its strongest possible opposition to the FAA's proposal to close the Air Traffic Control Tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m. daily.

Adopted:

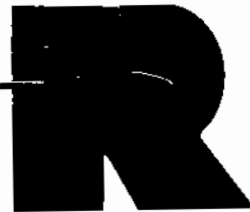
Certified:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of Council

051L

# ROANOKE REGIONAL AIRPORT COMMISSION

5202 Aviation Drive  
Roanoke, VA 24012-1148  
(540) 362-1999  
FAX (540) 563-4838  
www.roanokeairport.com



March 22, 2005

The Honorable Mayor Hutcherson and Members  
Lynchburg City Council  
900 Church Street  
Lynchburg, VA 24504

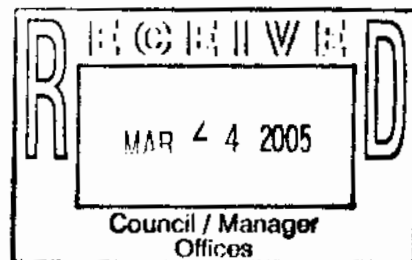
Dear Mayor Hutcherson and Members of Council:

I am enclosing a copy of Resolution No. 10-031605 stating the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission's opposition to a proposal by the FAA to close the Air Traffic Control Tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m., which resolution was adopted by the Airport Commission at its meeting on March 16, 2005.

The Roanoke Air Traffic Control Tower assumes approach control for Lynchburg after Lynchburg's tower closes each night. Therefore, this possible action by the FAA would affect Lynchburg Regional Airport as well as Roanoke. Your support of the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission's endeavor to keep the Roanoke Air Traffic Control Tower open on a twenty-four hour basis would be most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Cathy S. Pendleton  
Commission Secretary



cc: City Council

## **RESOLUTION OF THE ROANOKE REGIONAL AIRPORT COMMISSION**

**Adopted this 16th day of March, 2005**

**No. 10-031605**

A RESOLUTION stating the Commission's opposition to a proposal by the FAA to close the Air Traffic Control Tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m.

WHEREAS, Roanoke's Air Traffic Control Tower ("Roanoke Tower") was operated at the Roanoke Regional Airport, ("Roanoke Airport") on a 24 hour basis for many years until its hours were limited by the Federal Aviation Administration ("FAA") after the air traffic controllers strike in the early 1980's; and,

WHEREAS, in order to protect the public and promote economic development in the air service area served by Roanoke Regional Airport, which consists of 19 counties and contains more than three quarters of a million citizens, the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission, the City of Roanoke, County of Roanoke, and federal legislative representatives worked tirelessly for more than 15 years to restore 24 hour tower operations; and

WHEREAS, the 24 hour local coverage was finally re-established at ROA in July of 1999; and,

WHEREAS, the FAA has recently proposed that the Roanoke Tower again be closed between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. as a way to cut costs; and,

WHEREAS, the safety and terrain issues present in 1999 remain today; and,

WHEREAS, closing the Roanoke Tower during late night hours would unnecessarily jeopardize public safety and harm economic development in the Roanoke Valley in the following ways:

1. The Roanoke Regional Airport is the largest airport and the Roanoke Tower is the only 24 hour Roanoke Tower in western and southwestern Virginia; the Tower also is responsible for handling late night and early morning air traffic for the Lynchburg Airport;
2. In order to provide for the well-being of pilots, passengers, and the citizens of the Roanoke Regional Airport air service area, it is most desirable and safer to have controllers in the Roanoke Tower at all times who can hear pilots and see the airfield in order to assist aircraft in difficulty and respond to emergency situations;
3. The same level of safety and response to aviation users of Roanoke Regional Airport and Lynchburg Regional Airport cannot be provided by controllers located at the FAA's Washington Center, which is hundreds of miles from Roanoke, available only by radio and already serving many other air service areas and hundreds of aircraft;

4. The Roanoke Airport has cargo carriers operating large aircraft, general aviation aircraft, and occasional large jet charters, including, without limitation, aircraft carrying Virginia Tech athletic teams, which operate between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m. in reliance on the Roanoke Tower being in operation;

5. Although passenger aircraft frequently need to and do land at the Roanoke Airport after midnight due to schedules, or weather and mechanical delays, passenger carriers will refuse to land at such times if the Roanoke Tower is closed;

6. Having the Roanoke Tower open and available to handle passenger and cargo aircraft on a 24 hour basis is vital to economic development and the growth of the Roanoke Valley; and

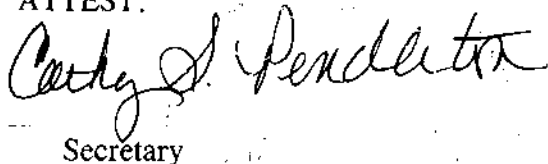
7. Due to visibility problems and the applicable FAA regulations, if the hours of the Roanoke Tower are limited, land between the Roanoke Tower and the intersection of the runways that is critical for future airport growth cannot be developed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Roanoke Regional Roanoke Airport Commission as follows:

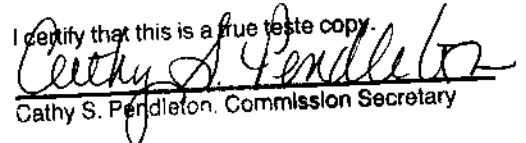
1. The Commission adopts this means of expressing its strongest possible opposition to the FAA's proposal to close the Air Traffic Control Tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m; and,

2. The Commission Secretary is directed to forward an attested copy of this resolution to The Honorable John Warner, The Honorable George Allen, The Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte, The Honorable Rick Boucher, The Honorable Virgil Goode, FAA Administrator Marion C. Blakey, Mayor and Members of Roanoke City Council, Chairman and Members of Roanoke County Board of Supervisors, Mayor and Members of Lynchburg City Council, and the governing bodies of the jurisdictions served by the Roanoke Regional Airport.

ATTEST:

  
Secretary

VOTE: AYES: Macfarlane, Milliron, Smith, Whittaker, Turner  
NAYS: None  
ABSENT: None

I certify that this is a true and correct copy.  
  
Cathy S. Pendleton, Commission Secretary



# County of Roanoke

P.O. BOX 29800  
5204 BERNARD DRIVE  
ROANOKE, VIRGINIA 24018-0798  
(540) 772-2005  
FAX (540) 772-2193

DIANE S. CHILDERS, CMC  
CLERK TO THE BOARD  
Email: dchilders@roanokecountyva.gov

BRENDA J. HOLTON, CMC  
DEPUTY CLERK  
Email: bholtan@roanokecountyva.gov

March 23, 2005

The Honorable John Warner  
The Honorable George Allen  
The Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte  
The Honorable Rick Boucher  
The Honorable Virgil Goode  
FAA Administrator Marion C. Blakey  
Mayor and Members of Roanoke City Council  
Mayor and Members of Lynchburg City Council  
Roanoke Regional Airport Jurisdictional Governing Bodies

Re: FAA Airport Control Tower Proposal

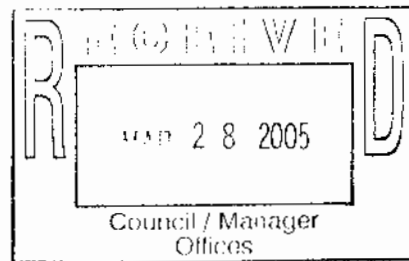
Attached is a copy of Resolution No. 032205-1 stating Roanoke County's opposition to a proposal by the FAA to close the air traffic control tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m. This resolution was approved by the Board of Supervisors at their meeting on Tuesday, March 22, 2005.

If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Brenda J. Holton, CMC  
Deputy Clerk to the Board

Attachment  
cc: File



AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF ROANOKE  
COUNTY, VIRGINIA HELD AT THE ROANOKE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER  
ON TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 2005

**RESOLUTION 032205-1 STATING ROANOKE COUNTY'S  
OPPOSITION TO A PROPOSAL BY THE FAA TO CLOSE THE AIR  
TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER LOCATED AT ROANOKE REGIONAL  
AIRPORT BETWEEN THE HOURS OF MIDNIGHT AND 5:00 A.M.**

WHEREAS, Roanoke County's Air Traffic Control Tower ("Roanoke Tower") was operated at the Roanoke Regional Airport ("Roanoke Airport") on a 24-hour basis for many years until its hours were limited by the Federal Aviation Administration ("FAA") after the air traffic controllers strike in the early 1980s; and

WHEREAS, in order to protect the public and promote economic development in the air service area served by Roanoke Regional Airport, which consists of 19 counties and contains more than three quarters of a million citizens, the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission, City of Roanoke, County of Roanoke, and federal legislative representatives worked tirelessly for more than 15 years to restore 24-hour tower operations; and

WHEREAS, the 24-hour local coverage was finally reestablished at ROA in July of 1999; and

WHEREAS, the FAA has recently proposed that the Roanoke Tower again be closed between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m. as a way to cut costs; and

WHEREAS, the safety and terrain issues present in 1999 remain today; and

WHEREAS, closing the Roanoke Tower during late night hours would unnecessarily jeopardize public safety and harm economic development in the Roanoke Valley in the following ways:

1. The Roanoke Regional Airport is the largest airport and the Roanoke Tower is the only 24-hour tower in western and southwestern Virginia; the tower also is responsible for handling late night and early morning air traffic for the Lynchburg Airport.

2. In order to provide for the well-being of pilots, passengers, and the citizens of the Roanoke Regional Airport air service area, it is most desirable and safer to have controllers in the Roanoke Tower at all times who can hear pilots and see the airfield in order to assist aircraft in difficulty and respond to emergency situations.

3. The same level of safety and response to aviation users of Roanoke Regional Airport and Lynchburg Regional Airport cannot be provided by controllers located at the FAA's Washington Center, which is hundreds of miles from Roanoke, available only by radio and already serving many other air service areas and hundreds of aircraft.

4. The Roanoke Airport has cargo carriers operating large aircraft, general aviation aircraft, and occasional large jet charters, including, without limitation, aircraft carrying Virginia Tech athletic teams, which operate between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m. in reliance on the Roanoke Tower being in operation.

5. Although passenger aircraft frequently need to and do land at the Roanoke Airport after midnight due to schedules, or weather and mechanical delays, passenger carriers will refuse to land at such times if the Roanoke Tower is closed.

6. Having the Roanoke Tower open and available to handle passenger and cargo aircraft on a 24-hour basis is vital to economic development and the growth of the Roanoke Valley.



7. Due to visibility problems and the applicable FAA regulations, if the hours of the Roanoke Tower are limited, land between the Roanoke Tower and the intersection of the runways that is critical for future airport growth cannot be developed.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of Supervisors of Roanoke County, Virginia, as follows:

1. That the Board adopts this resolution as the means of expressing its strongest possible opposition to the FAA's proposal to close the air traffic control tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m.; and

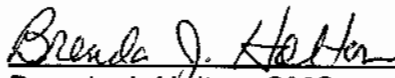
2. That the Clerk is directed to forward an attested copy of this resolution to The Honorable John Warner, The Honorable George Allen, The Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte, The Honorable Rick Boucher, The Honorable Virgil Goode, FAA Administrator Marion C. Blakey, Mayor and Members of Roanoke City Council, Mayor and Members of Lynchburg City Council, and the governing bodies of the jurisdictions served by the Roanoke Regional Airport.

On motion of Supervisor Flora to adopt the resolution, and carried by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Supervisors McNamara, Church, Wray, Flora, Altizer

NAYS: None

A COPY TESTE:

  
Brenda J. Holton, CMC  
Deputy Clerk

cc: File  
The Honorable John Warner  
The Honorable George Allen  
The Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte

The Honorable Rick Boucher  
The Honorable Virgil Goode  
FAA Administrator Marion C. Blakey  
Mayor and Members of Roanoke City Council  
Mayor and Members of Lynchburg City Council  
Roanoke Regional Airport Jurisdictional Governing Bodies



**CITY OF ROANOKE  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK**

215 Church Avenue, S.W., Room 456  
Roanoke, Virginia 24011-1536  
Telephone: (540) 853-2541  
Fax: (540) 853-1145  
E-mail: clerk@ci.roanoke.va.us

**MARY F. PARKER, CMC**  
City Clerk

**STEPHANIE M. MOON, CMC**  
Deputy City Clerk

**SHEILA N. HARTMAN**  
Assistant City Clerk

March 24, 2005

File #9

The Honorable Carl B. Hutcherson, Jr., Mayor  
and Members of the Lynchburg City Council  
900 Church Street  
Lynchburg, Virginia 24504

Dear Mayor Hutcherson and Members of Council:

I am enclosing copy of Resolution No. 36996-032105 expressing the opposition of the Council of the City of Roanoke to a proposal by the FAA to close the Air Traffic Control Tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m.

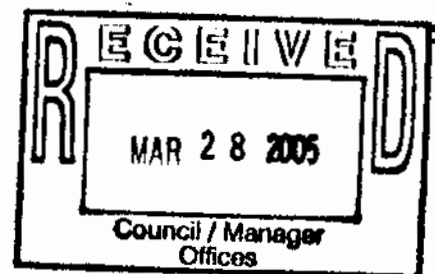
The abovereferenced measure was adopted by the Council of the City of Roanoke at a regular meeting which was held on Monday, March 21, 2005, and is in full force and effect upon its passage.

Sincerely,

Mary F. Parker, CMC  
City Clerk

MFP:ew

Enclosure



WMM

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

The 21st day of March, 2005.

No. 36996-032105.

A RESOLUTION expressing the Council's opposition to a proposal by the FAA to close the Air Traffic Control Tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m.

WHEREAS, Roanoke's Air Traffic Control Tower ("Roanoke Tower") was operated at the Roanoke Regional Airport on a 24-hour basis for many years until its hours were limited by the Federal Aviation Administration ("FAA") after the air traffic controllers' strike in the early 1980s;

WHEREAS, in order to protect the public and promote economic development in the air service area served by the Roanoke Regional Airport, which area consists of 19 counties and contains more than three-quarters of a million people, the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission, the City of Roanoke, the County of Roanoke, and federal legislative representatives worked tirelessly for more than fifteen years to restore 24-hour tower operations;

WHEREAS, the 24-hour local coverage was finally re-established at the Roanoke Regional Airport in July 1999;

WHEREAS, the FAA has recently proposed that the Roanoke Tower again be closed between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. as a way to cut costs;

WHEREAS, the safety and terrain issues present in 1999 remain today; and

WHEREAS, closing the Roanoke Tower during early morning hours would jeopardize unnecessarily public safety and harm economic development in the Roanoke Valley and in the region in the following ways:

1. The Roanoke Regional Airport is the largest airport and the Roanoke Tower is the only 24-hour tower in western and southwestern Virginia; the Roanoke Tower also is responsible for handling late night and early morning air traffic for the Lynchburg Regional Airport;

2. In order to provide for the well-being of pilots, passengers, and the citizens of the Roanoke Regional Airport air service area, it is most desirable and safer to have controllers in the Roanoke Tower at all times who can hear pilots and see the airfield in order to assist aircraft in difficulty and respond to emergency situations;

3. The same level of safety and response to aviation users of Roanoke Regional Airport and Lynchburg Regional Airport cannot be provided by controllers located at the FAA's Washington Center, which is over 200 miles from Roanoke, available only by radio and already serving many other air service areas and hundreds of aircraft;

4. The Roanoke Regional Airport has cargo carriers operating large aircraft, general aviation aircraft, and occasional large jet charters, including, among others, aircraft carrying Virginia Tech athletic teams, which operate between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m. in reliance on the Roanoke Tower being in operation;

5. Although passenger aircraft frequently need to and do land at the Roanoke Regional Airport after midnight due to schedules, or weather and mechanical delays, passenger carriers will refuse to land at such times if the Roanoke Tower is closed;

6. Having the Roanoke Tower open and available to handle passenger and cargo aircraft on a 24-hour basis is vital to economic development and the growth of the Roanoke Valley; and

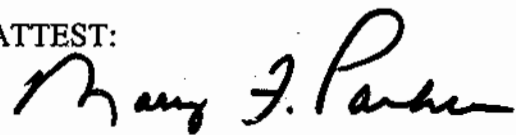
7. Due to visibility problems and the applicable FAA regulations, if the hours of the Roanoke Tower are limited, land between the Roanoke Tower and the intersection of the runways that is critical for future airport growth cannot be developed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Roanoke as follows:

1. The Council adopts this means of expressing its strongest possible opposition to the FAA's proposal to close the Air Traffic Control Tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m.

2. The City Clerk is directed to forward an attested copy of this resolution to The Honorable John Warner, The Honorable George Allen, The Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte, The Honorable Rick Boucher, The Honorable Virgil Goode, FAA Administrator Marion C. Blakey, The Honorable Chairman and Members of Roanoke County Board of Supervisors, The Honorable Mayor and Members of Lynchburg City Council, and the governing bodies of the jurisdictions served by the Roanoke Regional Airport.

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary J. Parker". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over the printed name.

City Clerk.



**CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA**  
P.O. BOX 869 SALEM, VIRGINIA 24153-0869

April 4, 2005

Mayor and Members of Council  
City of Lynchburg  
900 Church Street  
Lynchburg, VA 24504

Dear Mayor and Members of Council:

The Council of the City of Salem at its regular meeting held on March 28, 2005, adopted Resolution 1054 expressing its opposition to the Federal Aviation Administration's proposal to close the air traffic control tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m. A copy of Resolution 1054 is attached for your information.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Joyce C. Bailey  
Deputy Clerk of Council

jcb  
Attachment



IN THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA, MARCH 28, 2005:

RESOLUTION 1054

WHEREAS, Roanoke Air Traffic Control Tower ("Roanoke Tower") was operated at the Roanoke Regional Airport ("Roanoke Airport") on a 24-hour basis for many years until its hours were limited by the Federal Aviation Administration ("FAA") after the air traffic controllers strike in the early 1980s; and

WHEREAS, in order to protect the public and promote economic development in the air service area served by Roanoke Regional Airport, which consists of 19 counties and contains more than three quarters of a million citizens, the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission, City of Roanoke, County of Roanoke, and federal legislative representatives worked tirelessly for more than 15 years to restore 24-hour tower operations; and

WHEREAS, the 24-hour local coverage was finally reestablished at ROA in July of 1999; and

WHEREAS, the FAA has recently proposed that the Roanoke Tower again be closed between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m. as a way to cut costs; and

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1. The Roanoke Regional Airport is the largest airport and the Roanoke Tower is the only 24-hour tower in western and southwestern Virginia; the tower also is responsible for handling late night and early morning air traffic for the Lynchburg Airport.
2. In order to provide for the well-being of pilots, passengers, and the citizens of the Roanoke Regional Airport air service area, it is most



desirable and safer to have controllers in the Roanoke Tower at all times who can hear pilots and see the airfield in order to assist aircraft in difficulty and respond to emergency situations.

3. The same level of safety and response to aviation users of Roanoke Regional Airport and Lynchburg Regional Airport cannot be provided by controllers located at the FAA's Washington Center, which is hundreds of miles from Roanoke, available only by radio and already serving many other air service areas and hundreds of aircraft.
4. The Roanoke Airport has cargo carriers operating large aircraft, general aviation aircraft, and occasional large jet charters, including, without limitation, aircraft carrying Virginia Tech athletic teams, which operate between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m. in reliance on the Roanoke Tower being in operation.
5. Although passenger aircraft frequently need to and do land at the Roanoke Airport after midnight due to schedules, or weather and mechanical delays, passenger carriers will refuse to land at such times if the Roanoke Tower is closed.
6. Having the Roanoke Tower open and available to handle passenger and cargo aircraft on a 24-hour basis is vital to economic development and the growth of the Roanoke Valley.
7. Due to visibility problems and the applicable FAA regulations, if the hours of the Roanoke Tower are limited, land between the Roanoke Tower and the intersection of the runways that is critical for future airport growth cannot be developed.

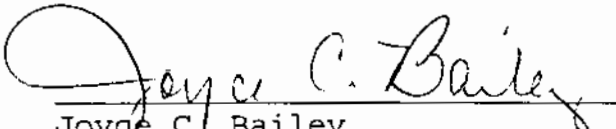
NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Council of the City of Salem, Virginia, as follows:

1. That the Council adopts this resolution as the means of expressing its strongest possible opposition to the FAA's proposal to close the air traffic control tower located at Roanoke Regional Airport between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m.; and
2. That the Clerk is directed to forward an attested copy of this resolution to The Honorable John Warner, The Honorable George Allen, The Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte, The Honorable Rick Boucher, The Honorable Virgil Goode, FAA Administrator Marion C. Blakey, Mayor and Members of Roanoke City Council, Mayor and Members of Lynchburg City Council, and the governing bodies of the jurisdictions served by the Roanoke Regional Airport.

Upon a call for an aye and a nay vote, the same stood as follows:

John Christopher Clemens - Aye  
Jane W. Johnson - Aye  
John C. Givens - Aye  
Howard C. Packett - Aye  
Carl E. Tarpley, Jr. - Absent

ATTEST:

  
Joyce C. Bailey  
Deputy Clerk of Council  
City of Salem, Virginia